



Teacher Preparation: The Key to Early Reading Success

Presented by Margie Gillis, Ed.D.
Greater Hartford Literacy Council
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- Private, non-profit research facility founded in 1935 for the purpose of scientific study of speech and language.
- Since 1965, Haskins Labs also has focused on reading research.
- Reading researchers have studied the development of literacy abilities, including discovery of phoneme awareness and its importance for learning to read. Brain research has informed us about the reading systems of the brain.
- Haskins' researchers were instrumental in assembling a nationally-recognized panel of experts to create the Connecticut Blueprint for Reading Achievement.

When Did Reading Enter the National Spotlight?



Inadequate Teacher Preparation

- The majority of teacher education programs do not train future teachers in research-based methods of reading instruction (Walsh, 2006; www.nctq.org)
- Education faculty have gaps in their own knowledge of this content (Joshi, 2006)
- Certification exams for teachers have very few questions on research-based concepts of literacy development or instruction (Stotsky, 2006).

Misunderstanding: Reading is Natural

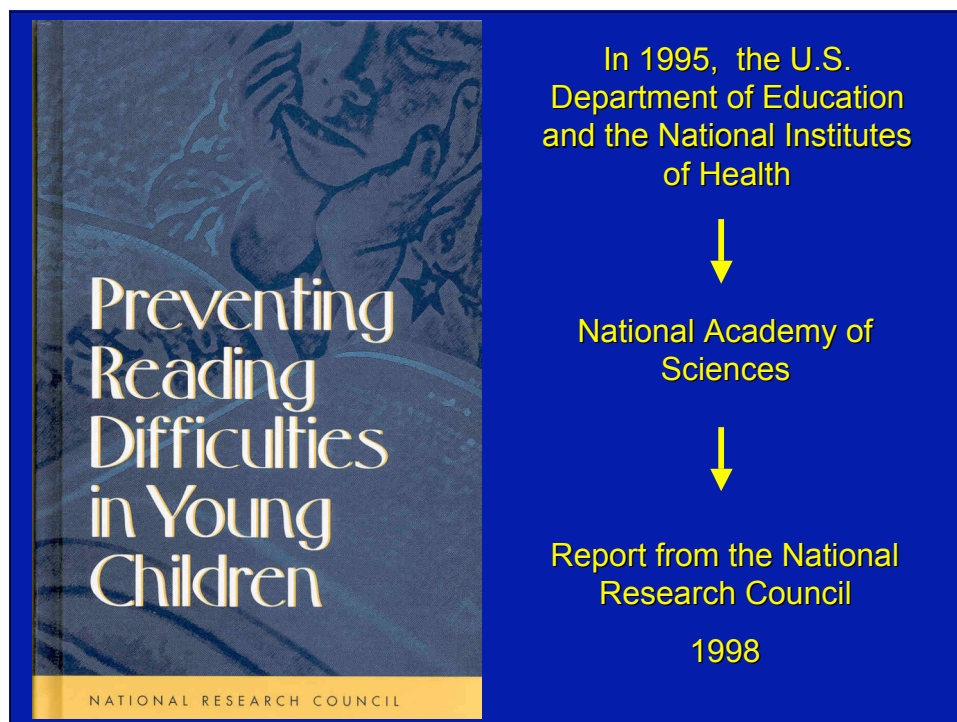
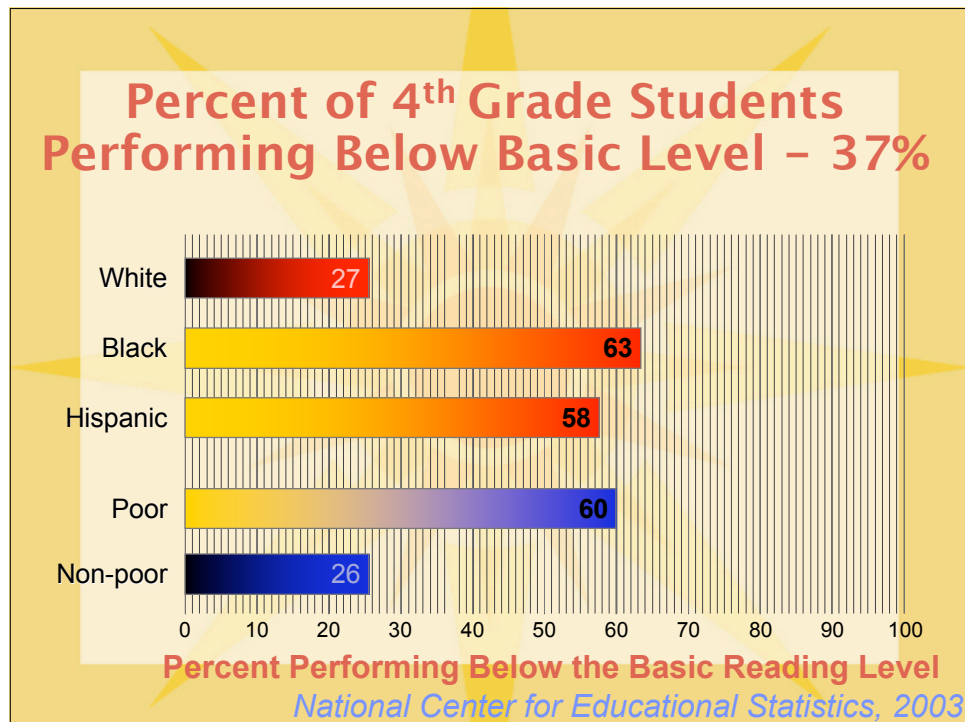
“Reading print is as natural as reading faces. Learning to read should be as natural as any other comprehensible aspect of existence.”

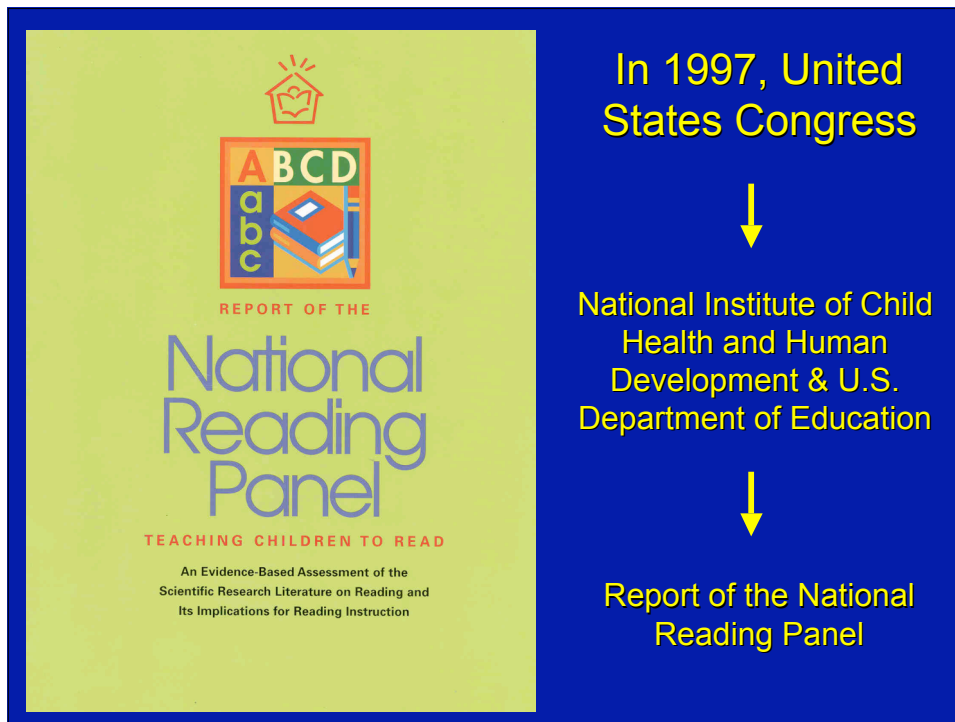
Frank Smith, 2003

Corollary to this: If you can read, you can teach someone to read.

Reality

Learning to read is **NOT** natural. Our brains are wired for oral language. Therefore, children must be taught explicitly and systematically to apply the code--not in a kill and drill mentality that may have been applied in olden days, but in an interactive, developmentally-appropriate, and engaging manner.





Haskins

...At the Forefront in Setting Policy for Reading Instruction in the State of Connecticut...

Haskins' researchers were instrumental in assembling a nationally-recognized panel of experts to create the Connecticut Blueprint for Reading Achievement.

"This report provides a blueprint for all stakeholders who have an interest in ensuring that every child is taught reading well."

CONNECTICUT'S BLUEPRINT FOR READING ACHIEVEMENT
The Report of The Early Reading Success Panel

Connecticut State Department of Education — 2000

National Assessment of Educational Progress 2003 (2005) CT Grade 4 Reading Scores

Group of Students/%	Average Score	Percentage of students at: Basic or Below	Prof	Adv.
White/69(69)	238(234)	47(53)	37 (32)	13 (15)
Hispanic/14(13)	206(203)	82(85)	15 (12)	3 (3)
Black/14(13)	201(201)	88 (88)	11 (10)	1 (2)

Reading Scores in CT

- In CT, 53% of whites, 85% of Hispanics, 88% of African-American 4th graders are reading below grade level.
- The 2005 results further revealed:
Connecticut had the nation's largest achievement gap between rich and poor students in three of the four tests (4th grade reading, 8th grade reading and 8th grade math).

– *National Assessment of Educational Progress*

The Connecticut Alliance for Great Schools

The Cost of Reading Failure

- What does this mean for our state when year after year thousands of children are leaving our public schools without knowing how to read, calculate or write at basic levels?
- One consequence — Connecticut's rate of juvenile detention for African Americans is the third highest in the nation (13 times the rate for whites) and for Hispanics is the second highest (after Mississippi).

Sickmund, Melissa. Juveniles in Corrections, Juvenile Offenders and Victims, National Report Series, Office of Justice Programs June 2004,
<http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojjdp/202885.pdf>



Economic Implications

- A child who cannot read has very few options for the future.
- Only 20% of people have the education that 75% of employers want.

Human Capital Policy Initiative, 2002

Reading Experiences

- Children from low-income families typically enter school a full year and a half behind their middle-class peers in language ability. The average middle-class first grader has been read to more than 1,250 hours. For some children in low-income families, the comparable figure is 25 hours.

University of Chicago

The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3

“In four years. . . An average child in a professional family would have accumulated experience with almost 45 million words, an average child in a working-class family would have accumulated experience with 26 million words, and an average child in a welfare family would have experience with 13 million words.”

Hart and Risley, 2003

A child who has been read to from a young age:

- Is better prepared to learn to read.
National Reading Panel, 2000
- Has heard more than 30 million words by age 3 and has a vocabulary of 20,000 words by age 6.
Hart & Risley, 1995, Meaningful Differences
- Scores highest on reading, math, and general knowledge tests.

Christian, Morrison, & Bryant, 1998



- Learning to read, unlike learning to speak, must be taught.





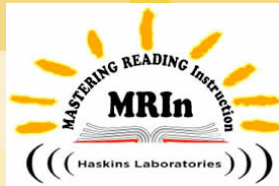
2000-2004

- A research-to-practice feasibility study, funded by the US and CT Departments of Education, and the University of RI, to apply reading research in Grade K-2 classrooms to improve reading instruction
- Trained over 30 mentors, including Haskins Mentors and Teacher Specialists
- Worked with over 200 teachers in 20 schools in CT and RI
- Based on their research-to-practice experiences in real classrooms, ERS leaders and mentors developed professional development models and tools for teacher training, and three CT model schools



2003-2007

- *Four-year Teacher Quality grant funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, a division of the US Dept of Education, to inform higher education and policy-makers about how to train teachers to more effectively teach reading.*
- Focus on 1st grade reading instruction.
- Worked with 120 classroom teachers in 37 schools across 9 CT districts, including Hartford.



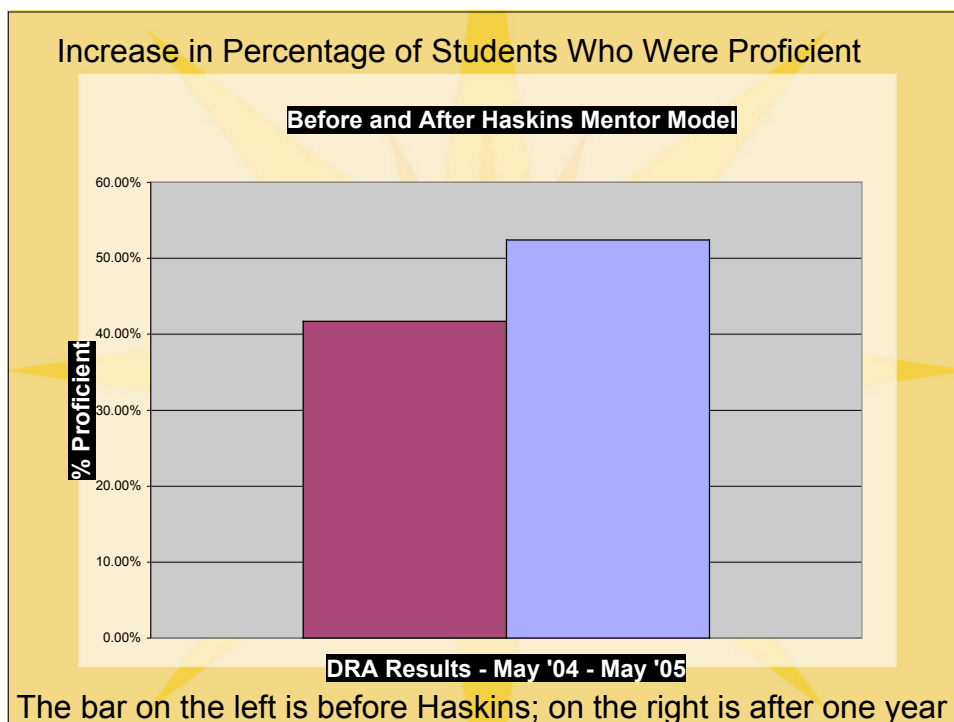
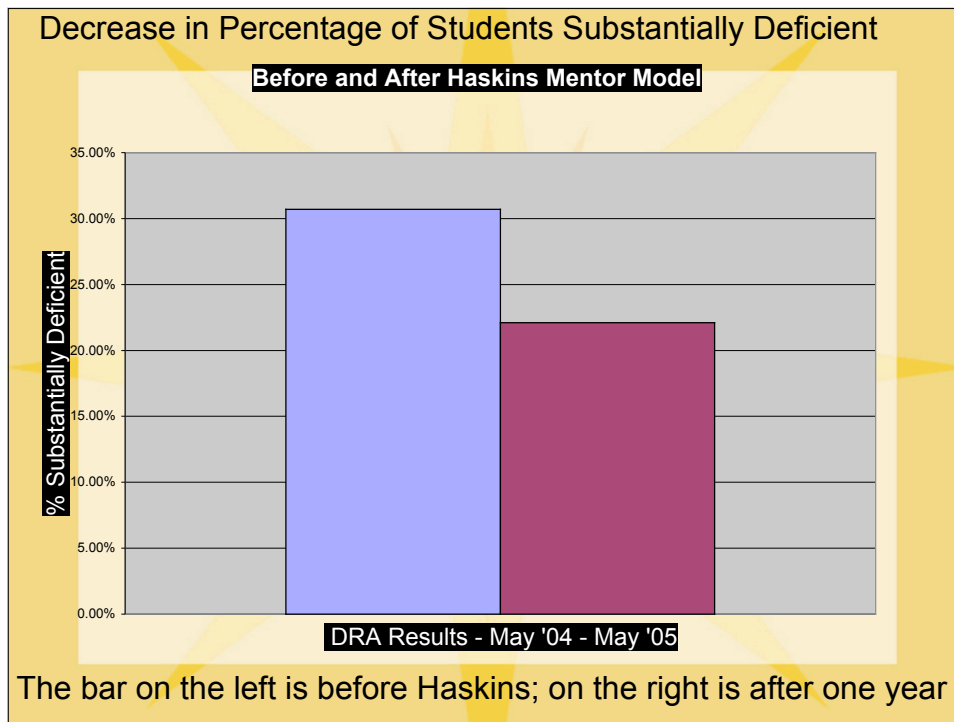
- Links between teacher *knowledge* and *practices* and *student achievement*
- The value of a systematic delivery model for professional development (PD) in comprehensive reading instruction
- The importance of teachers receiving in-class support from an expert mentor as part of the PD

Developmental Reading Assessment

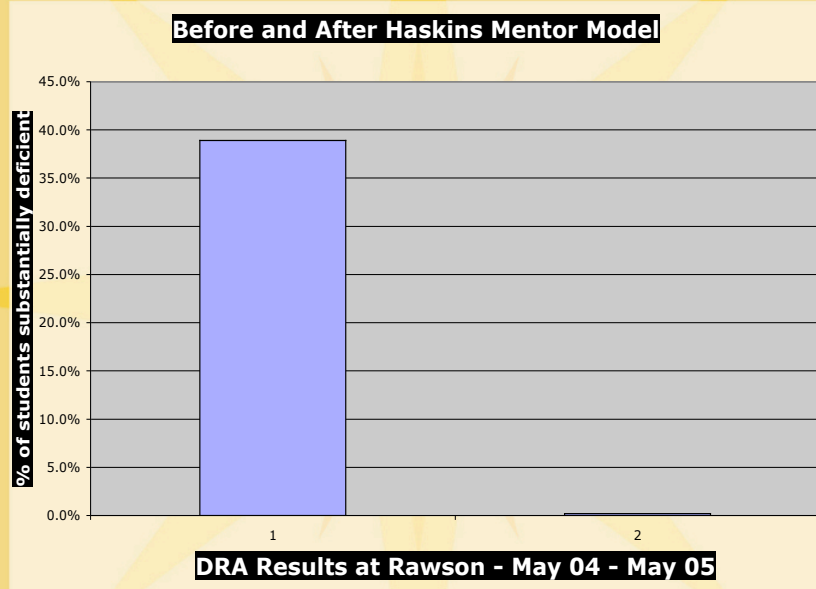
- State-adopted assessment for assessing K–3rd grade reading
- Mandated for all priority schools/districts
- Used by many other districts in CT
- Not recognized by NCLB/Reading 1st because of lack of norms, reliability, and validity

Developmental Reading Assessment

- Identifies 3 'levels' – *Substantially Deficient*, *Benchmark* and *Proficient* for measuring student reading achievement
- *Substantially deficient* – Students are more than 1/2 year below grade level
- *Benchmark* – Students are considered at risk for reading problems (approx. 1/2 year below grade level)
- *Proficient* – Students are considered on grade level

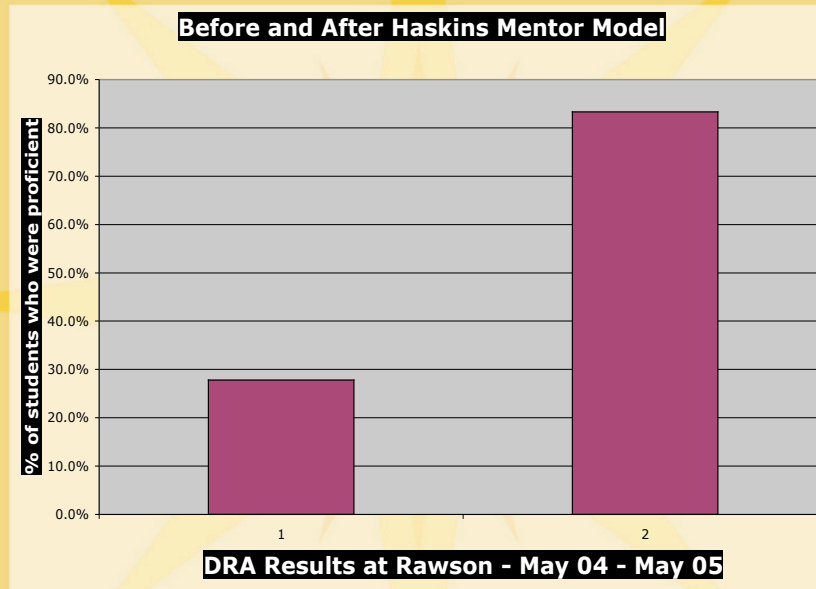


Decrease in Percentage of Students Substantially Deficient



The bar on the left is before Haskins; on the right is after one year

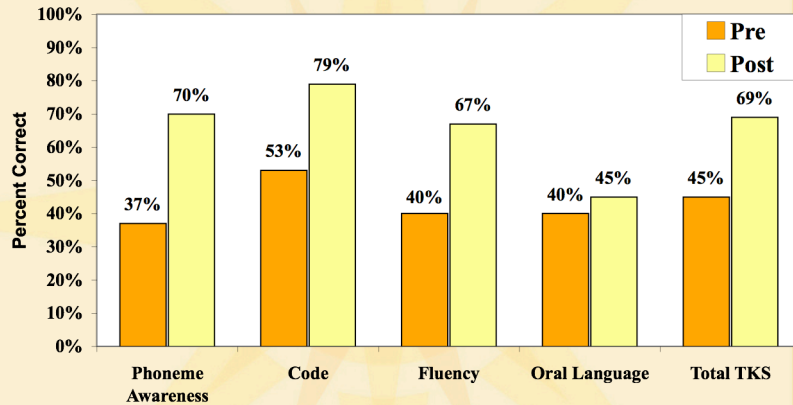
Increase in Percentage of Students Who Were Proficient



The bar on the left is before Haskins; on the right is after one year

Teachers Learned What They Were Taught

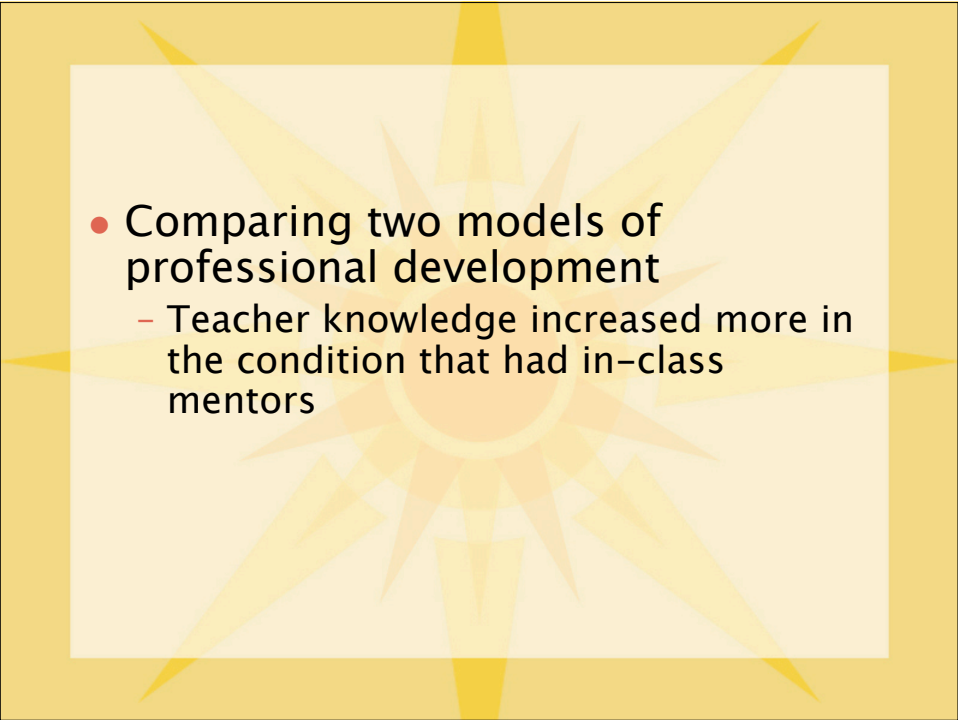
Teacher Knowledge Survey: First Year

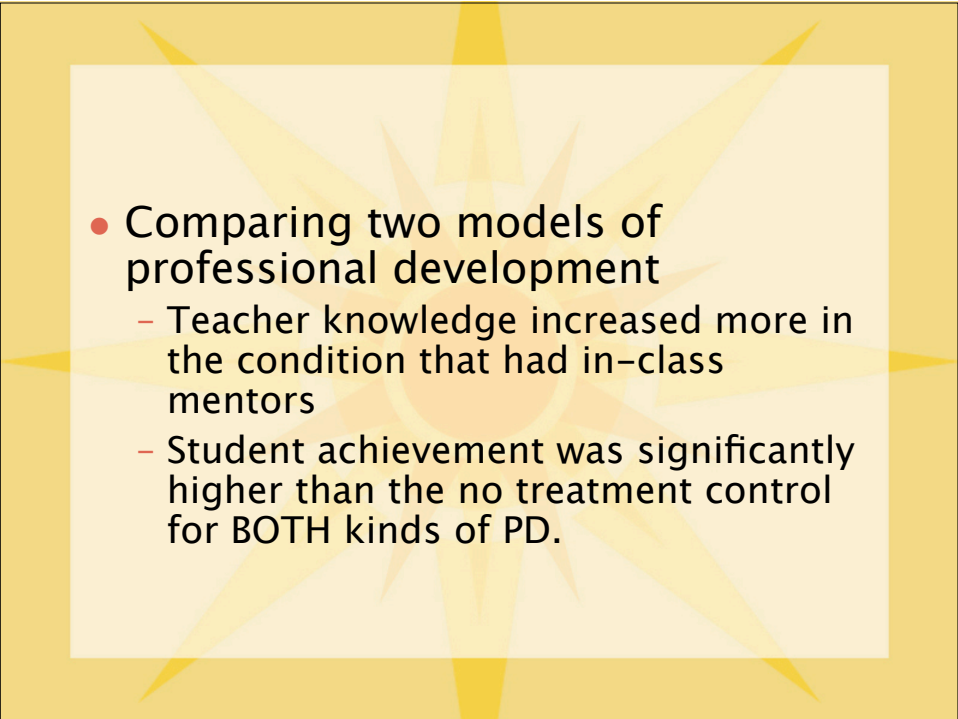


In Year 1, teachers learned about phoneme awareness, code (phonics) and fluency. They didn't receive oral language component of the training in Year 1. Therefore, that bar doesn't show the same growth.

Results:

- 1) Comparing two models of professional development
 - Monthly workshops by mentors
 - Monthly workshops plus weekly in-class support by mentors

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 - Teacher knowledge increased more in the condition that had in-class mentors

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- Comparing two models of professional development:
- Teacher knowledge increased more in the condition that had in-class mentors
 - Student achievement was significantly higher than the no treatment control for BOTH kinds of PD.
 - Teacher attitudes generally positive in both conditions; high accolades for in-class support.

Teacher Testimony

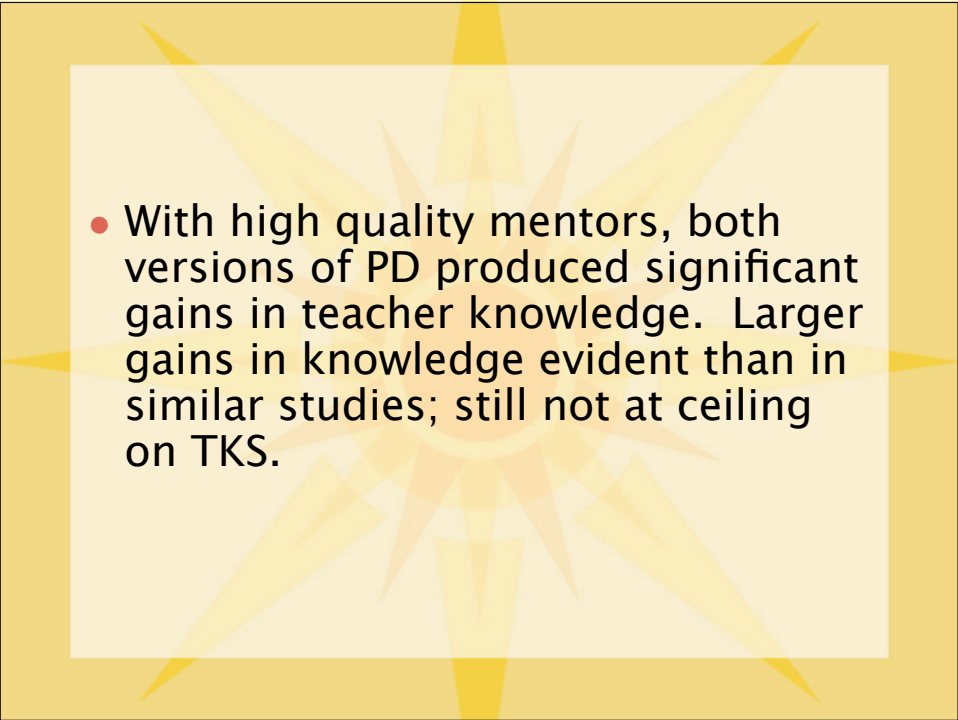
- *"I always thought my students could make more progress. After working with Haskins this year, I feel empowered."*
- *"I cannot begin to describe what an impact MRIn has had on my life. Professionally I have grown in my ability to deliver instruction and my knowledge of reading development. I now have a renewed sense of energy and motivation. I know that I have the knowledge and ability to teach every first grader to read."*
- *"I received minimal training throughout my college career. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to be part of this project. I feel confident that because of this PD I can teach each student to read."*

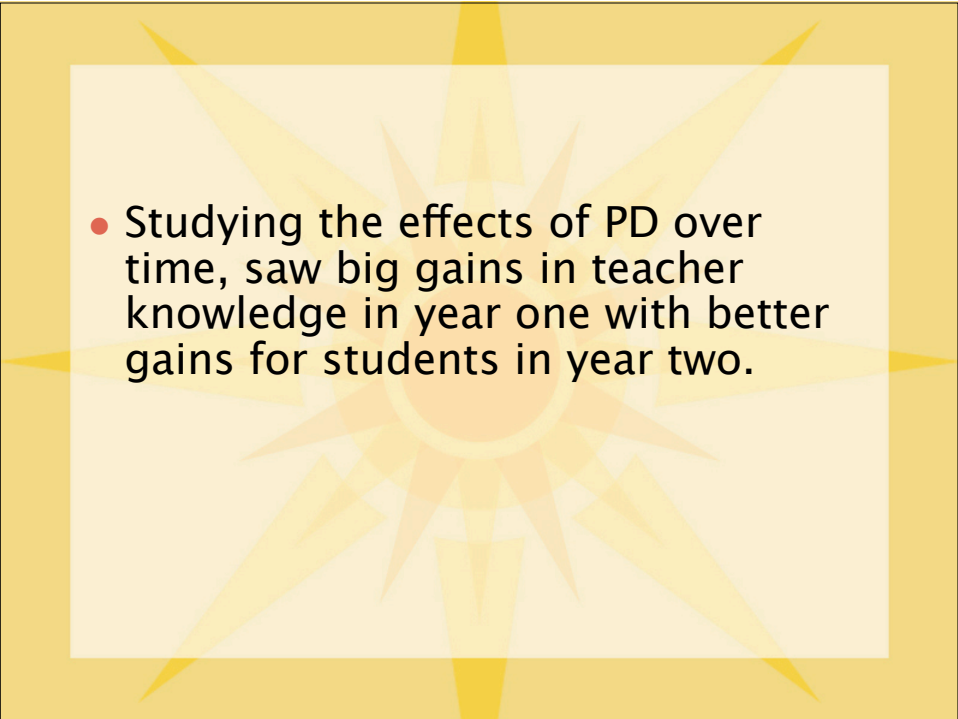
Results

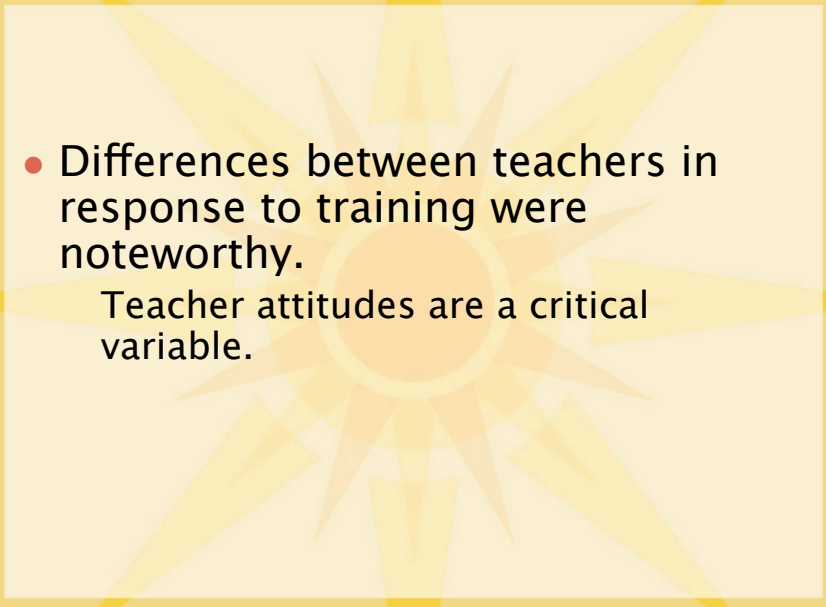
2) Examining the effects of one vs. two years of PD (with in-class mentor group)

- In the condition with in-class mentor support, mentors seeing variation in teachers' implementation of systematic, explicit instruction.

- Rated each on components of direct instruction.
- Identified 18 of the 55 as 'exemplary'

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- With high quality mentors, both versions of PD produced significant gains in teacher knowledge. Larger gains in knowledge evident than in similar studies; still not at ceiling on TKS.

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- Studying the effects of PD over time, saw big gains in teacher knowledge in year one with better gains for students in year two.

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- A large, faint sunburst graphic with many rays is centered in the background of the slide. The rays are a light yellow color, and the center is a slightly darker yellow circle.
- Differences between teachers in response to training were noteworthy.

Teacher attitudes are a critical variable.

Haskins Professional Development Model

Emphasis on Teacher Knowledge

Informed
Comprehensive
Method-proof
Empowering
Engaging

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